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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7524

INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 1037

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 5641

RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI PRIORITY 3189

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 6722

RHMFSS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHMFSS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA/DSCA// PRIORITY

RHMCSUU/SACEUR POLAD SHAPE BE PRIORITY

RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001689

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL MARR MOPS PTER IZ GG IR PK AF TU

SUBJECT: CJCS ADMIRAL MULLEN CALL ON PRESIDENT GUL

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson, reason 1.4 (b) (d)

¶ 1. (C) Summary: President Gul told CJCS Admiral Mullen September 15 that Turkey wanted our close counterterrorism cooperation to continue and that U.S. success in Iraq is critical for Turkey. Admiral Mullen pledged U.S commitment to sustaining intelligence cooperation. Gul said Turkey continues to view Kirkuk as a flashpoint, and warned that an "overly maximalist" approach by the Kurds would not serve their long-term interests. He urged the U.S. engage Pakistan with great caution due to the fragility of the Zardari government. He reiterated Turkey's support for Georgian territorial integrity and said the Russians could ill afford the international isolation it was bringing upon itself. Turkey will continue to cooperate with the U.S. on Georgia. On Iran, Gul said his lengthy discussions with Ahmadinejad had convinced him that the Iranian leadership was living in a fantasy world. On NATO-EU relations, Gul saw serious problems ahead which will require cooperation unobtainable under the current environment and urged a return to the Agreed Framework. End summary

Mil-Mil Relations

¶ 2. (C) U.S.-Turkish military ties are the main pillar of a deeply-rooted bilateral relationship, President Gul said. Even after the end of the Cold War, strong military relations have and must continue because of the importance of events in the region. Mullen said that he was honored to have been the first foreign visitor to make a counterpart call on GEN Basbug. The U.S. and Turkey have a large number of common interests, and bilateral military relations are good and improving. He asked for assistance to extend Air Cargo Hub operations at Incirlik Air Base beyond the December 31, 2008 expiry of the current memorandum of agreement.

Terrorism/Iraq

¶ 3. (C) Gul said cooperation on terrorism is crucial and pledged Turkey will continue its contributions in the fight against al-Qaida. Gul expressed gratitude for U.S. cooperation against the PKK. Iraqi Kurds also benefit from this cooperation, he asserted. Mullen noted that our joint work against PKK terrorism had opened other doors of cooperation and stated that the U.S. was committed to sustaining anti-PKK intelligence cooperation.

¶ 4. (C) U.S. success in Iraq and maintenance of Iraq's

territorial integrity are crucial for Turkey, Gul said. Turkey is ready to communicate more, consult more, and contribute more military training to Iraq. Turkey remains focused on Kirkuk and views ethnic tensions there as a potential flashpoint. The real problem in Kirkuk was not Turkmen-Kurdish relations, but the tension between Kurds and Arabs. Calling Kurds "our kin," Gul warned that an "overly maximalist" approach by the Kurds would not serve their long-term interests. Mullen said there have been many positive changes in Iraq, but the situation remains fragile and could be reversed. Key issues ahead include Kirkuk, Article 140, and the provincial election law. Building a national non-sectarian military force was also a major objective. The U.S. will continue to push hard on the PKK problem.

Afghanistan/Pakistan

¶ 15. (C) Gul flagged Turkish engagement in and assistance to Afghanistan, arguing that more than military assistance is required to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. Pakistan must be a part of the solution. However, the new government is fragile. While operations against terrorists must be conducted, care must be taken to avoid creating new enemies. The gravity and magnitude of problems Pakistan faces, especially in education, and the potential for political unrest demand great caution. Mullen agreed that more than military force is required in Afghanistan and told Gul that terrorist safe havens inside Pakistan were a major U.S. concern. He concurred that the situation in Afghanistan

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was dire, predicted more trouble ahead, and said that anything Turkey could do would be a good investment. He also suggested that India needed to be a part of the solution and praised the progress Prime Minister Singh has made in improving India-Pakistan relations. Gul noted that Turkey had hosted a trilateral summit with Afghanistan and Pakistan in April 2007. He hoped to hold a second meeting as soon as the Pakistani authorities were ready.

Georgia

¶ 16. (C) Gul reiterated Turkey's unequivocal support for Georgia's territorial integrity. Russia committed a grave error in invading Georgia and could not afford the international isolation it was bringing upon itself. Admiral Mullen thanked Gul for Turkish support in the crisis and told Gul that more cooperation will be required in the days ahead.

Iran/Central Asia

¶ 17. (C) Mullen said the U.S. views Iran with intense concern. Gul replied that his lengthy discussions with Ahmadinejad had convinced him that the Iranian leadership was living in a fantasy world, uncomprehending of the world around them. High energy prices have given the Iranian leadership freedom to act in the manner it does. Gul claimed Turkey's relations with countries of Central Asia were strong because of a common Turkic heritage. Turkey is prepared to cooperate more closely with the U.S. in Central Asia.

NATO-EU

¶ 18. (C) The current impasse on NATO-EU relations is worrisome, Gul said, because there may be serious international problems ahead that will require a concerted Western response and therefore a level of cooperation that is not currently possible. He urged a return to the Agreed Framework and asked Admiral Mullen to listen to the concerns

of Turkish military leadership. Mullen noted he had discussed this issue with GEN Basbug at the recent NATO CHODS meeting in Sofia.

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WILSON